

## 1975-1991

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### 1975:

- Gerald Ford pardoned Richard Nixon making many people unhappy and causing him to lose the presidency to Jimmy Carter

### 1976 - 1981:

- Jimmy Carter is elected president
- America celebrates its Bicentennial (200 years)
- There is still high inflation and unemployment
- Due to an oil shortage caused by an embargo against America and other nations from the Middle Eastern nations, gas prices soared
- Carter negotiates a treaty designed to turn the Panama Canal back over to Panama
- Carter helps Israel and Egypt negotiate peace between the two nations
- In 1979, the Shah of Iran is overthrown and replaced with the Ayatollah Khomeini. The U.S. allows the Shah to come to America for medical treatment.
  - Some Iranian people were very unhappy
  - As a result, an angry mob of people invaded the U.S. Embassy and held those within hostage
  - April of 1980, Marines are sent in to attempt to rescue the people. Before the rescue can even begin, 8 of the marines are killed as a result, the mission was called off
  - In July, after the Shah died, negotiations began to release the hostages
  - On January 20, 1981, Carter's last day as president, the hostages were released after 444 days

### 1981-1988:

- His campaign strategy against Jimmy Carter was to ask the people of America whether they are "...better off than you were four years ago?"
- Another strategy he used was not being Jimmy Carter
- Reagan also had a very optimistic view of America that relied on themselves rather than on the government
- 1981
  - He was shot by John Hinckley, Jr. ( who was trying to impress a movie star)
  - America's air traffic controllers went on strike ignoring a federal law. Reagan fired them all and refused to rehire them after the strike ended
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- January 20, 1981, Reagan Revolution began
  - America needed to be strong
  - Americans must be free
  - American's economic strength must be shown to the world and we needed to have smaller government and fewer taxes

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- American's needed less government involvement in moral issues in the home, church, and school
- Reaganomics
  - High inflation and high unemployment
  - Promised in his inauguration speech to end a "tax system which penalizes successful achievement and keeps us from maintaining full productivity"
  - Government spending was going to decrease
    - Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981
      - Cut income taxes and lowered the taxation rates for higher income earners
    - Reagan also wanted to cut the federal budget but because Congress and the White House were each unwilling to make appropriate changes, it did not happen leaving us with an even bigger federal deficit
      - In 1980, the debt amount was \$834 billion by 1990, it was \$2.3 trillion
      - Gramm-Rudman Act was designed to make sweeping reform of the budget automatically cutting it if Congress would not so we would be rebalanced by 1991
  - 1982: America was in a major recession
  - 1983: Economy experienced an upturn with lower unemployment (less than 5%)
  - Housing market boomed and there were more jobs than workers
- Reagan Doctrine
  - America pledged to support groups battling Communism in third world countries
  - 1981: El Salvador had a fight between Communism and democracy with the Russians and Cuba helping the Communist and America helping the democratic people
    - CIA organized groups of anti-communist guerillas to defeat the communists: Contras
    - Congress was unhappy with the policy of "helping" the Central American nations for fear of reviving ill will toward America reminiscent of the day of Theodore Roosevelt's "big stick" policy
  - 1983: Grenada
    - Tiny island in the Caribbean being used by the Cubans and Soviets each moving troops around
    - Communist leader of Grenada, Maurice Bishop, was overthrown for someone who was even more communist than, General Hudson Austin
    - Bishop was killed and other islands began asking for help of the Americans
    - Because we had a large number of American medical students in the region and because we were afraid another of the islands would turn Communist like Cuba, Reagan ordered U.S. Marines into the region to liberate the island of Grenada
    - It had huge impact on the world as far as the length's America would go to defeat Communisms

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- America was also instrumental in freeing Afghanistan from being a Soviet stronghold as well as work in the Middle East to stop Terrorism there
- 1984:
  - Reagan and Bush run for re-election against Walter Mondale and Geraldine Ferraro
    - Ferraro was the first female VP candidate for a major party
    - Reagan was accused (by the Democrats) of being anti-feminist even though he had appointed the first woman Supreme Court Justice and placed women in other important government roles
  - This election was a 49 state landslide with Reagan winning
- Reagan's second term was easier for him
- Cold War begins to thaw as Reagan met with Mikhail Gorbachev, the Russian prime minister
  - Under Gorbachev, it was urged that Russia undergo Perestroika
    - Restructuring of the Russian economy to a more capitalist (freer) economy rather than communist
    - Also urged Glasnost: Openness in society
      - Meaning the government needed to loosen some of the control it held over the people
    - While Gorbachev tried to do these things, he still clung to the 'old' way of doing things and did not really help Russian society because all it did was leave Russians wanting more freedom
- Improved diplomatic ties with Russia
  - Strategic Arms Reduction Talks: designed to cut the amount of long range nukes in half
  - Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty: designed to eliminate most medium range missiles from Europe
  - Strategic Defense Initiative (AKA STAR WARS): a proposed space based defense shield which would safeguard America from a nuclear attack
    - Russia knew in the long run this would further tax its already struggling economy because they would then have to research and build their own SDI projects
- 1987: Reagan gave a speech near the wall in West Germany asking Gorbachev to "tear down this wall "

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### 1988-1992:

- By 1989: Eastern European nations whom Russia had “helped” after World War II to become communist began to get rid of the communist governments they had been under for so many years
  - November 9, 1989 is the day when East Germany began allowing its citizens to go out of the country without repercussion or proper paperwork
  - That evening people joined at the wall from East and West Berlin and some even began to demolish the wall
- December 1989: President George Bush in a meeting with Mikhail Gorbachev announces the Cold War is over
- 1988 Election
  - George H.W. Bush won the election against Michael Dukakis
  - Bush became the first vice president to be elected president in 152 years
- 1990
  - Americans with Disabilities Act forbids discrimination in employment, public accommodations, and transportation for the disabled
- August 2: Iraq invaded Kuwait
- East and West Germany officially reunite
- Immigration Act of 1990: wide sweeping immigration reform allowing 700,000 aliens yearly
- 1991
  - January: Operation Desert Storm (aka Persian Gulf War or First Gulf War) begins
    - American led air war against Sadaam Hussein’s regime in Iraq in response to the invasion of Kuwait
    - Ground troops are also sent in and after freeing the country of Kuwait, President Bush says with our objectives met, the war is over
  - February: USSR is officially dissolved
- 1992
  - Bush is nominated by the Republican party for president
  - William Jefferson Clinton is nominated by the Democratic party
  - Bill Clinton wins the election and is inaugurated Jan. 20,1993